

Chief, Geography Division

6 August 1957

Chief, Geographic Research Area

Research on Africa

1. As you know, provision was made in the budget submissions for FY 1958 and FY 1959 for a program of external research on the geography of Africa. Authority for the program was requested because: (a) we recognize a priority need for ORR to strengthen its research capabilities on this area to a point commensurate with an anticipated increasing demand; and (b) the program would protect us in the event that no way can be found to perform the necessary research internally.

2. It remains to be established that such a contract is clearly the best of the means we have at hand to secure adequate geographic files on Africa. In the event that this is so established, we have yet to determine the research plan and an appropriate contract.

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3. I should like to discuss this matter in detail with you, [redacted], and -- as a substantively-equipped and interested party -- [redacted] at a meeting in my office at 1400, 14 August 1957. Other people in D/GG may be invited if you so desire. It would seem that, as a first step, we must define at this meeting exactly (a) the area and topical coverage we require; (b) the form of the results -- whether raw collation, evaluated collation, basic research report series, or other type of product; (c) the priorities that apply; and (d) the further programs by which this effort is to be realized in the form of finished intelligence. With this done, we can take the second step of reassessing our existing internal resources in comparison with the advantages and disadvantages of externally conducted work.

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4. It is possible that we will not accomplish everything in one meeting. However, it is desirable that you and your people give thorough consideration to the aspects of the matter that are noted above, as well as to others that seem appropriate to you, in advance of the scheduled discussion.

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